

Environmental law allows 'playing God'

WHO WILL WE LET PLAY GOD?

The Endangered Species Act was authorized for 20 years. It expires Sept. 30. Congress has not made time to discuss the issue this year because of more important things — like an election — and because the subject has become a lot more complicated than anyone imagined back in the Nixon years.

I've been assured by one of our senators' aides that the law will remain in effect even though Congress won't be dealing with the issue until next year. That

gives us all more time to think, read, talk and write about it. A good place to start is with the resolution HR4045 introduced in the House this year by Rep. Gerry Studds (D-Mass).

You might write to representatives and senators asking if they know of any bills corresponding to the resolution.

Among biologists who study these things there's a recognition that the big threat to most endangered species is loss of habitat. An updated law should recognize and protect entire ecosystems or communities even be-

fore particular species become threatened. The key words are "critical habitat."

Finally, with folks such as the "Wise Use" coalition on the heels of environmentalists, there will be serious questions about whether or not we even need to bother saving all species, and how will we decide which species are worth saving and which ones aren't. Will you be content to leave it up to the president's "God Squad?"

— Daniel Clinchard

It's a groupie's life

Delusions of free love, beer and covers

You see them. Through clouds of smoldering cigarettes, hovering around pitchers of Heineken, you see them. The harem of lycra clad, perfectly coiffed, sexual playthings. These women fill their beds with Nirvana and Soundgarden. You've found your mecca.

You want to know the secret tattoos and birthmarks of James Hetfield. You want liberation from past lovers. No more sweaty socks and smelly jocks, no more prehistoric meat-and-potatoes men.

You want a strumming Satriani protege with the body to put Commandments to shame. You desire tight leather pants and Jim Morrison lyrics whispered in your delicate, triple-pierced ears.

You envision callused hands that

can play you in bed as well as "Purple Haze" on the guitar.

Cast off your starry-eyed dreams sister, and wake up to the twisted cult of groupie-ism.

There are certain privileges known only to groupies. But, you may ask, how do I trap one of these elusive guitar-wielding chimeras of mythological legend? Must I tattoo my body with the lyrics to Spinal Tap's "Bitch School"? Must I know the difference between humbucker and single-coil pickups?

Slash would shake his top-hatted, hair-matted head. He would assure you that Axl never kept any female MENSA members as groupies. The secret to snaring is simple: adoration.

Approach any band member with a raving desire to touch his drumsticks. Express avid interest in learning how to play "Stairway to Heaven". Look him over with an intoxicated, wistful stare. I promise you'll be giving him a ride back to your place, along with his equipment and a few of his buddies.

Your relationship will flourish. You'll find yourself present at numerous band rehearsals (picking up beer cans, emptying ashtrays — this is excellent preparation for a waitress job.)

He may write a love song for you, or let you sing backup if you can manage that deep, throaty "Babes in Toyland" quality in your voice.

You may experience delusions of you, him and 2.6 guitars settling down into a cozy warehouse.

But remember, they are delusions.

Things usually start turning sour when your fights become inspirational material. He performs bitter, teeth-gnashing declarations about tampon wrappers on the floor.

Somehow, his songs about S&M just don't seem funny anymore.

You follow him to Duffy's and Howard Street Tavern. Does temptation lurk within micro mini skirts, nose rings and dyed roots? It does. He will love you forever, or at least until the women of L7 invite him backstage to show him their interpretation of "Wargasm."

One day you will realize that free covers, free beer and free love don't satisfy like the pleasure of watching his bass guitar plummet from your 10th story apartment window.

Maybe your mother was right. Maybe you should scout the supermarket aisles for an uncalculated guy who really digs Neil Sedaka and Easy 107 FM. Maybe you should settle down with a nice, conservative meat-and-potatoes man who will give you the white picket fence, the Cuisenart and the square lawn in suburbia.

Then again, maybe groupie-ism isn't so bad after all.

— Sheryl Schmidtke is a former groupie and Diversions contributor.

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